



# Code of Behaviour for Coaches

All coaches of children and young athletes should:

- Never put the health, wellbeing and safety of athletes at risk and always consider health and safety before the development of performance.
- Develop a positive working relationship with athletes, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Make sure all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and the experience of those taking part.
- Promote the positive aspects of athletics (e.g. fair play).
- Act as a role model and display consistently high standards of behaviour.
- Follow all guidelines laid down by Athletics Ireland.
- Hold appropriate qualifications, insurance cover, and adhere to child protection requirements.
- Never exert undue influence over participants to gain personal benefit or reward.
- Never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances.
- Encourage participants to value their performances and efforts and not just results.
- Treat all athletes equally and never label athletes according to their ability, e.g., “top athlete” etc.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Never use foul or inappropriate language.
- Never engage in any form of sexual relations with anyone under the age of 18, or vulnerable adults.
- Adhere to club insurance policy; do not train in an environment where members are not covered.
- All club communication via print, radio, and social media must be channelled through the club PRO
- Never post defamatory comments or accusations on any media platform about the club, its facilities, committee, coaches or athletes.
- All training communication will be either through the club email system, club group text or club WhatsApp. Communication with any training sub-group must include a member of the committee.
- Do not communicate individually by social media, text or email with juvenile athletes; always, communicate via their parents/guardians.
- A coach should under no circumstance undermine the efforts of any other coach or club and/or attempt to ‘poach’ an athlete.
- Recognise the development needs and capacity of all juvenile athletes, regardless of their ability by emphasizing participation for all while avoiding excessive training and competition.
- Never take coaching sessions on your own. Be accompanied/assisted by at least one other adult at coaching sessions and that assistant needs to adhere to child protection requirements.
- If a coach organises a personal session (non-Derg AC), this is not covered by the club’s insurance policy. Personal sessions need to be communicated to the parents of juvenile athletes.
- Avoid situations where you are alone with a juvenile. For example if a child needs to be accompanied to the toilet, ensure that there are always other adults in view.
- Though not always possible to achieve, the ideal ratio is one coach to 10 juveniles. Where training takes place with multiple coaches, a group within the large training group may comprise more than 10 juveniles but the overall ratio should be no more than 10 juveniles per coach, ideally.
- Be a positive ambassador for your club and never undermine the agreed objectives/rules of the club’s executive committee.

In order to register as a member of the club in a coaching capacity, you are obliged to sign up to the above rules and best practices.